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OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
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To : Deputy Director (Intelligence)
Subject: Comment on New Soviet Disarmament Proposal.

The most significant effect of the new Soviet disarmament proposal may be its influence on the French. Foreign Minister Molotov, by presenting French Ambassador Joxe with an advance copy of the disarmament proposal included in Vyshinsky's speech before the UN General Assembly demonstrated clearly that he was attempting to bolster recent overtures to the French. He made specific reference to the August 26 conversation in which the Soviet ambassador told premier Mendes-France in Paris that the Soviet and French positions on disarmament were not far apart. Molotov also told ambassador Joxe that "account must be taken of the German problem," a not very subtle hint that disarmament talks would be a good excuse for further delaying German rearmament plans. Recent Soviet propaganda has also suggested to the French that disarmament progress was possible.

Vyshinsky, in another bid for French support, told the General Assembly, as Molotov had told Joxe, that plans for the prohibition of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction should be based on the UK-French proposals made on 11 June at the London talks.

Despite obvious obscurities, the new disarmament proposal contained in Vyshinsky's speech is reminiscent of the 11 June UK-French proposal. It is the most specific yet offered by the USSR. Conspicuously absent were the demands "to condemn propaganda for a new war," disbandment of bases on foreign soil, etc.

Completely new in the Soviet proposal was the call for a reduction in armaments and armed forces by fifty-percent of "agreed norms," within six months or one year. Also new was the proposed creation of a temporary international control commission to operate during this period under the Security Council which could "request" necessary information from states. These would be "preliminary measures"--a first stage--presumably to be implemented before other more comprehensive steps.

State Dept. review completed

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In regard to these "preliminary measures," Vyshinsky did not define what Moscow would regard as "agreed norms." In the past the Soviet disarmament proposals have called for a one-third reduction of armaments and armed forces within one year. In regard to the temporary control commission, the new Soviet resolution avoids the question of inspection by stating that the commission may "request" information from states, which strongly suggests that the USSR is still unwilling to allow international inspection teams to operate freely on Soviet soil.

In contrast to the French-UK 11 June proposal, which provided that a permanent control organ should be established and functioning before any reduction in conventional or other types of arms could take place, the Soviet plan provides that disarmament should begin simultaneously with the establishment at the outset of a temporary and relatively powerless control organ. This temporary body would then be replaced, during the disarmament process, by a permanent control organ as a last step in the Soviet disarmament plan. Hence, while the UK-French proposal--representing the Western position--continues to give priority to control, the USSR, as in the past, places it in a secondary role in the process of a comprehensive disarmament plan.

Finally, although the resolution provides that the permanent international control organ would have the power to inspect on a permanent basis, there is no suggestion that Moscow would consent to free inspection inside the USSR. The USSR could, therefore, still deny inspection of its nuclear or armament installations on the claim that such inspection violated its national sovereignty.

The new proposal appears to be a studied attempt to give the impression of a "new look" to Moscow's position on disarmament. It also leaves the way clear for extensive maneuverability during the negotiations which will ensue. The USSR may believe that it can garner additional support in the UN as well as an opportunity to make effective propaganda in an internationally recognized forum.

The remainder of Vyshinsky's one hour and a half-long speech recapitulated almost every familiar propaganda theme for the past six months.

The effect of the new Soviet proposal probably will arouse intense public interest in Western Europe--particularly among neutralist groups. While no official reaction is yet known,

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the position taken by most Western European governments at the outset probably will be one of guarded optimism. In West Germany, Thomas Debler, Chairman of the Free Democratic Party--included in Adenauer's coalition--noted a "striking similarity" between the terms used by Vyshinsky and those used at the London disarmament talks. "Why don't we try new talks with Russia," he asked, and added that the idea that every word coming from Moscow was contaminated should be dropped.

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Acting Assistant Director
Current Intelligence

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